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ABSTRACT

In the course of elaborating "la technique," Jacques Ellul stoutly contradicts the democratic assumption that citizens can have sufficient information to participate knowledgeably in the governing process. "La technique" converts message systems into propagandization networks and erects an inflexible boundary which democracy cannot cross. Contemporary media are not information channels, but purveyors of sociological propaganda. The propaganda process produces a crystallized and self-justified person, entailing two corollaries: information and propaganda are identical concepts, and public opinion does not result from knowledgeable use of information but is simply a crowd's unpredictable arousal over political fads. In Ellul's analysis, the alternatives--direct participation through technological improvement, refurbishing viable intermediary groups, and relying on intellectuals--all flounder. The choice that is left is unpleasant: either democracy must utilize propaganda, which is by nature antidemocratic, or it will perish. (Author/AA)

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Jacques Ellul and Democracy's 'Vital Information' Premise

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DEMOCRATIC societies characteristically presuppose information as their lifeline. Democracy will not function, we are told, unless all participants find the "day's raw intelligence" readily attainable. For supplying that material, we assign the press an indispensable role. Since 1791, the media have been charged with anchoring a government by popular decision.

The rhetoric appears everywhere: What better combination for vigorous societies than sovereign citizens and their free access to sound news?[1] Whether sketching the Bill of Rights with a quill pen or forming charters for Telstar and cable television, the common urge for unfettered communication persists. Thomas Jefferson saluted the press in 1823 as the "best instrument for enlightening the mind of man,"[2] and John Hohenberg makes an identical claim in 1973, warning us that ensnaring "a free press" shackles mankind.[3] Of late, mice nibble energetically around the edges, but complaints center on press performance, not the "vital information" principle itself. In an era widely prone to vicious attack, our message channels have absorbed their share of rebuff. But among all the discordance—on coverage of Watergate and otherwise—open news uniformly remains our national glory; it still burns hotly in our democratic veins.

Obviously our post-Freudian, post-Heideggerian era understands humans differently than John Locke did in the Seventeenth Century. And while Clark Mollenhoff may be too much for most ("the future of American Democracy is contingent upon the performance of the press"[4]), our attachment to information stays righteously on course. No popular government without a popular press! This premise stands firm with Senators Goldwater and Tunney, Judge Sirica and John Mitchell, college journalists and James Reston, William Buckley and John Kenneth Galbraith.

Enter Jacques Ellul

Informed participation as precondition of democratic life—that is sturdy timber, indeed, and a convention which warrants exacting theoretical scrutiny. We spar over secondary factors and customarily fuss about details. How much do we analyze the supposition itself? Such examination is proposed for this essay, an investigation undertaken primarily in terms of Jacques Ellul, the diminutive French social philosopher and lawyer from the University of Bordeaux. Ellul demonstrates a rare gift for penetrating interrogation. He does not merely lament some cracks in the apparatus, he confronts us directly with fundamental queries about the informational life-line *per se*.

Santa Barbara's Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions has been Ellul's primary channel into the United States.[5] And with the translation of *The Technological Society* published in 1964 by Alfred Knopf, Ellul's reputation in North America became secure. Within communications, Ellul is generating authentic interest among those who lament the field's research triviality and lack of theoretical inventiveness. Ellul appears as an increasingly tempting possibility for students of the media who seek valid principles with which to provide wholeness and substance.

Ellul's macro perspective revolves around his organizing idea, *la technique*. Since 1935, in 26 books and more than 100 articles, he has developed this notion as the Twentieth Century's "most important phenomenon," finding it necessary to "start from there to understand everything else."[6] *La technique* serves as the ultimate conviction animating his thought, his *arche* or first principle, the elementary component of modern society.[7] What Ellul intends is a frame of mind which avoids the treadmill of treating all facts as apparently relevant and conceivably equal. The result is a body of tidy, non-whimsical substantive reasoning.

The one feature that best characterizes Ellul's *arche* is efficiency. *La technique*, he writes, "is the totality of methods rationally arrived at and having absolute efficiency in every field of human knowledge."[8] All human laws and values are subordinated to *la technique's* requiring "the one best way"; the Kingdom of God becomes equated with the maximally proficient. Underneath all the seeming diversity, an ethic of efficiency remains the en-

during, monistic essence of modern life. Efficient ordering saturates both good and bad, appearing as important to the wheat farmer as to the chemical companies which promote "better adhesion" as a virtue of their napalm.

> Whatever the diversity of countries and methods, they have one characteristic in common: concern with effectiveness. . . . This is the supreme law which must never be forgotten. [9]

Ellul wants to identify, as Jacob Burckhardt did, the spirit underlying events and institutions.[10] *La technique* refers to a "collective sociological reality"[11] which expresses itself in varied cultural forms, an omnivorous administrative force driving all facets of contemporary life. His focus is not a series of operations, but a phenomenon, an attitude, patterns beneath the artifacts.[12] Max Weber, in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, followed a similar route. He did not describe capitalism in terms of economic laws and free enterprise; rather he outlines the spirit behind it, its frame of mind, "a capitalist temper in which work, wealth, and profit could become . . . something ethically compelling, morally sovereign."[13] In like manner Ellul's *la technique* refers not to machines but machineness, not to bureaucracies but bureaucratization, not to political propaganda but an integrative process.

I propose in the sections below to take that notion and illuminate our common democratic commitment to unlimited information. We customarily believe that today's intensified obligations demand a wider distribution of news and analysis to our citizens than ever before. If *la technique* saturates our contemporary climate of opinion, as Ellul suggests, can such a prospect ever be realized? Can public information actually fulfill its role in raising social conflict from the "plane of violence" to the "plane of discussion"?[14] Ellul provides us the intellectual equipment for pursuing such questions with the resolve and fervor they deserve.

La Technique *As Sociological Propaganda*

In *Propaganda* (and more indirectly in *The Political Illusion*), Ellul constructs an analysis of modern communication systems from the viewpoint of *la technique*. And there he confronts democracy's lifeline head-on. Information, from his perspective,

does not exist in contemporary life. We delude ourselves into assuming, Ellul argues, that democratic processes can restrain our relentless march toward a unitary society. As a matter of fact, he aims to demonstrate that ultimately "democratic control is impotent with respect to the administrative state."[15] Modern means of communication, for Ellul, are not informational devices through which citizens guide political activities. They are not neutral message exchangers, but sociological propaganda systems manifesting an integrational proclivity. In a spirit akin to the monotechnics of Lewis Mumford, Ellul outlines an adjustment-conformity emphasis fundamentally destructive of democracy's very point of departure, its pluralism.[16]

Democracy as 'Way of Life' is Overwhelmed. Democracy, Ellul contends, becomes too easily and narrowly conceived as a political structure rather than a way of life, a complete concept of society, an environment of beneficent social relations. All our diffuse forms of communication, which in this case Ellul labels "sociological propaganda," contradict that style of life and produce a society whose modes of existence appear as one whole. His reference is to an omnipresent ideology expressing itself in every conceivable form—"in advertising, in the movies, in technology in general, in education, the *Reader's Digest*; and in social service case work and settlement houses."[17] Thus he defines sociological propaganda as all those influences which "are in basic accord with each other and lead spontaneously in the same direction . . . are organized along spontaneous patterns and rhythms . . . and produce a certain general conception of society, a particular way of life."[18]

Ellul focuses, by analogy to a red-hot piece of iron, on permeating heat. Marshall McLuhan suggests another analog:

> To have acquired French or any other language as a total and pervasive organization of one's perceptions and sensory preferences is propaganda in Ellul's sense of the word. Propaganda, like climate or any total involvement in any situation, is not a matter of conscious perception.[19]

Consistently Ellul returns not so much to machines or particular bureaucracies or media artifacts, but to the administrative, efficient-minded mythos underlying and producing them.[20] He worries over a principle of social integration that penetrates

deeply, works upon unconscious habits from all sides, massages a person's roots and his motivations. Thus we experience a sort of imperceptible "persuasion from within" which often occurs unwittingly:

> For example, when an American producer makes a film, he has certain definite ideas he wants to express, which are not intended to be propaganda. Rather, the propaganda element is in the American way of life with which he is permeated and which he expresses in his film without realizing it.[21]

The information explosion creates a non-democratic sociological context. Further, in Ellulian perspective, it produces not informed but crystallized man. Ellul compares that with a frog incessantly stimulated: "We know what finally happens to the frog's muscles: they become rigid. This is not very conducive to political maturity."[22] Sociological propaganda shortcuts exacting consideration and exercise of conscience. Decisions which result are neither imaginative nor discerning. Actually democratic citizens obey the impulses of self-justification, not knowledgeable choosing. In fact, crystalization so closes man's mind to new ideas that it acquires an ironic and troubling dimension: We declare all new proposals not received by propagandization as themselves "just propaganda."

Information and Propaganda. Ellul very self-consciously opposes his themes to the common assumption that information and propaganda are two mutually antagonistic ideas. Modern research typically assumes that information addresses reason, is basically reliable and furnishes facts. Propaganda, on the other hand, is bedeviled as a series of tall stories, the work of seducers, authoritarians and illegitimate powers. Or, stating the issue more broadly, propaganda characteristically aims to indoctrinate, to psychologically manipulate toward predetermined ends.[23] Therefore, contaminating the democratic life-line with deception and falsehood is treasonous. Accurate, serious and documented information must be protected, we insist, from those with crooked intentions to manipulate.

Ellul reacts to our characteristic scholarship on this matter by erasing the distinction between information and propaganda. Contrary to simplistic differentiations between the two, he declares, they cannot be separated. No Manichean world exists here—one

side good, the other bad—saintly information on the one hand and diabolical propaganda on the other. In a vague, but deceiving way,[24] the two have coalesced into one. Should we insist on distinguishing them, we create illusions that information provides an authentic safeguard. We consequently blind ourselves to the real dangers and maintain "a reassuring contrast" which enables us "as men 'correctly informed,' to sleep peacefully."[25] We insist, then, that we are not "victims of propaganda because we are capable of distinguishing truth from falsehood."[26]

Ellul agrees that voluntary misrepresentation by corrupt elites must be considered "propaganda." However, all our concerns—while valid enough to be called agitational and psychological propagandas—are unenlightening, because they arise from considerations of audience and external means. Ellul concentrates on more subtle, covert, pervasive ways of standardizing populations, and notes at least four types of such propagandizing—sociological, integrational, horizontal and rational.[27] Though less typically studied, Ellul gives these forms of propaganda vastly higher significance: they structure public thinking, condition modern civilization as a whole and organize attitudes.[28] Together they express and buttress our saturation by today's dominant force, *la technique*.

Public Opinion. Nearly every major feature of Ellul's controversy with the information-press-democracy paradigm has been introduced so far: The environment created by sociological propaganda opposes democracy as a way of life; today's democratic man is not knowledgeable but crystallized; information and propaganda are not separate ideas. These contentions come together and assume their highest intensity under Ellul's discussion of public opinion.[29]

Ellul shows particular interest here because democracies hold public opinion in such sacred honor, and often proclaim it as the only possibility for limiting *la technique*. It has always been convenient to describe political democracy as the rule of public opinion.[30] Informed public opinion is typically acclaimed as a weapon of enormous power, and, indeed, the cornerstone of legislative government. Most agree that public opinion takes shape through a very complicated and mysterious process; yet we uniformly presuppose its rational tone and essential basis in facts.[31]

And around the notion of "facts," Ellul constructs his response to prevalent thinking on public opinion. "Governments being based on people," he writes of our typical assumption, "the people are called upon to give their opinion on everything; it is therefore necessary that the people know the global facts."[32] How does the public know facts, he asks. Such acquaintance can no longer be obtained directly; it is verbal knowledge conveyed by several intermediaries. The atmosphere in which public opinion comes to life is not the world of facts as experienced reality, "but a singular universe with its own logic and consistency."[33] In propagandized society, everything *is* image, Ellul declares; man's globe has become a translated and edited fabric of uniform color. He picks up Walter Lippmann's idea of the symbolic universe created by contemporary media and expands and applies it with the extraordinary thoroughness that characterizes Ellul's work.[34]

Ellul intensifies his argument more by insisting that the critical dispute is not even whether a fact arises from experience or within a world of images, but ". . . something getting the character of a *political* fact."[35] More important than simply creating a new human environment, in gathering up experience and events, the media "coalesce and orient" them into a political problem. Political facts become problems when it is commonly supposed "they must be solved (even if in reality they are not even problems) in order to give satisfaction . . . to those aroused and disturbed by public opinion."[36] The cycle works as follows: Some politicized facts elicit strong visceral responses, the latter organizing them into political problems. Then, public opinion crystallizes around the problem and demands a solution; "a crisis can no longer be avoided because opinion will not accept gentle and moderate solutions."[37]

One clear implication is the need for democracy, in its present situation, to "make propaganda" in the sense of public relations. The enormous growth of the "information office" in the United States is inevitable and natural for Ellul. If public opinion operates in a world of images, the quickest way for a government to succeed is by convincing the citizenry of its policies. By creating an image of accomplishment and insight, governments can nudge public opinion into conceiving the problems and solutions as they (governments) do.

However, Ellul means much more than a government's massively organized and orchestrated public relations. For him such publicity symptomizes the problem—is its mechanical dimension—but is not the issue itself.[38] While Ellul emphasizes that politicians cannot govern without publicity, he does not mean this can be created at will. Something more volatile and pervasive inheres, for Ellul, in the idea itself. Although "everything takes place in a universe of images, results are neither automatic nor predetermined. The government does not 'make' opinion. . . . And public opinion in no way forces the government, as it cannot specifically express itself. In reality we have a double paralysis rather than a double effectivness."[39]

In fact, Ellul distinguishes totalitarian and democratic governments precisely on this basis. Both take public opinion seriously.[40] But dictators can select and manipulate information until public opinion creates the problem and demands the solutions already selected by the dictator. The process is not predictable in democracies. "What is 'simple' in authoritarian systems [is] very complex in democracies," making the latter's situation even more precarious than the former's.[41]

In democratic theory, public opinion results from information and knowledge. "Pure" fact (information) conveyed to a rational public is said to be systematically organized into some stable form of public opinion which ultimately becomes transferred according to constitutional codes into procedures of action. Regardless of varying definitions, public opinion is commonly presumed to be more than a formless collection of responses. At a minimum, it presupposes conscious public discussion.[42] As distinguished from sentiment or taste, "an opinion is a verbal reaction coming at the end of the thinking process."[43]

On the contrary, for Ellul, no correlation whatever exists between the actual truth and the issues on which the public demands action. In some cases, for example, no factual basis exists whatever. Propaganda can use "as its point of departure some illusory, non-existent facts, even if a large part of the public knows the facts do not exist."[44] In other cases, the facts are ignored. We have erroneously succumbed, Ellul contends, to the habit of thinking that problems exist and that information simply presents the

problem to the court of public opinion. Actual circumstances, Ellul argues, prove decidedly otherwise.

Incidents or acts are unimportant *per se*, he says, unless staged and infected with enough values for reactions and opinions to coallesce. The bedrock of the popular will is not information, but politicized facts. Public opinion does not generate responsible political perspectives, it creates an aura of size and urgency. Public opinion is simply a crowd stopping (for unpredictable reasons) and becoming "fixed on some event."[45]

Ellul dismisses democracy's informational lifeline as illusory. He argues that contemporary message systems create a propagandized society and crystallized man, both inimical to a democratic framework. Distinctions between information and propaganda must be collapsed. Public opinion is more a fad than the product of serious judgment based on conscious discussion of facts. These elements, telescoped unmercifully in the paragraphs above, form the essence of Ellul's confrontation with the modern political mind.

Others have sensed weaknesses in the information-democracy model also. As a matter of fact, essentially three modifications have been constructed: 1) more individually direct *participation* through technological improvement, 2) refurbishing viable intermediary *groups*, 3) relying on *intellectuals*. Eager to maintain democratic values, these options alter emphases and themes in serious acknowledgment of a shifting political climate. These three themes organize the discussion below.

It testifies to the comprehensiveness of Ellul's argument that he presses its claims to declare these three options inadequate as well. As the sections which follow seek to demonstrate, in the process of contending that information does not exist, and as if hermetically sealing his argument, Ellul denies their efficacy in the face of *la technique* as sociological propaganda.

Participation and Events

One reconstitution of democratic theory stresses the "full participation" theme.[46] Direct public action, in this view, becomes the catchword for improving the quality of government. Ideally, enough interconnections develop as to allow everyone to share in

decision making. The New England town meeting is usually invoked.

Most advocates of this thesis stress majoritarian principles and direct involvement, a kind of romantic return to something approaching Rosseau's "Direct Democracy." Another version relates citizens to policy by slimming democracy down to voting decisions; this view stresses capable choice keeping leaders responsive to the public will. A more philosophically sophisticated outlook presumes that the very process of leader selection guarantees the similarity of leaders to the led.

Regardless of such variations, however, democracy, from this perspective, is conceived primarily in procedural terms—as a set of ready responses between citizen and officialdom. Consensus equals legitimacy. The sharing of ideas naturally yields policy formation.

Suggestions for Expanding Participation. This perspective tends to be uncritical about the actual formulation of public policy.[47] However, proponents of democracy through direct participation uniformly emphasize improving the communicative process. There is ardent commitment to the unfettered flow of information[48] and agreement on several recommendations to achieve it.

For one thing, advocates of direct democracy hail advances in communications as breakthroughs for the political process. Electronic hardware, we are assured, can provide accounts so detailed, swift, rich and accurate that at last man will "bring his intelligence to bear on resolving the central problems of society."[49] In that spirit, Peter Goldmark demonstrates how a modern telecommunication center can improve all city functions,[50] and Zbigniew Brzezinski anticipates a vast decentralization of political authority made possible by computerized information networks.[51] The golden moment will be realized especially when opinion polling becomes thoroughly streamlined and immediate to the issue at hand; then, declare Roll and Cantrill, "the decisions of those at the helm will be both right and enduring."[52] And R. Buckminster Fuller reaches the epitome of technological saviorhood:

> I see god in the instruments and mechanisms that work reliably, more reliably than the limited sensory departments of the human mechanism. . . . Devise a mechanical means for voting daily and secretly by each adult citizen of Uncle Sam's family: then—I assure you—will Democracy be saved, indeed exist, for the first time in history. This is a simple mechanical problem.[53]

In addition, improving the methods of professional performance is considered significant for effective citizen participation. Since the early Twentieth Century, within journalism itself, improved performanee has been emphasized.[54] Codes of professional ethics are given particular prominence within the participatory model and efforts have been made to measure the degree of professionalism.[55]

Moreover, dedication to objectivity is characteristically valued as another guarantee of smooth participation.[56] Gaye Tuchman clarifies the essential point: Regardless of whether objective reporting is actually possible, newsmen invoke it as strategic ritual to deflect criticism.[57] Even those recommending advocacy do not abandon objectivity as much as place themselves in a genuine dilemma, in which reporters do not forsake their neutrality as much as fulfill the demands of involvement we currently expect from professionals.[58] The issue thus becomes one of multiple and competing role expectations more than a turn to subjectivity.

All of these entreaties for improvement—better technology, more ethical journalists, deliberate objectivity—assume in one way or another that "when difficulties concerning the organization of information are resolved, everything will be resolved."[59]

Ellul regards direct democracy, in all of its variations, as a dangerous illusion which actually resolves nothing since the fundamental issues lie elsewhere—embedded in the nature of information itself. He utilizes his concept of sociological propaganda at this juncture by analyzing the nature of current events. His constant referent here is news and our contemporary avidness for it.[60] Ellul wants to understand that feature of modern life we call "current events."[61] Out of such analysis he concludes that a cry for more careful integration of the mass media and democracy is only an idle dream.

Ellul observes initially that our obsession with current events forces us into the immediate. In November, 1957, for example,

> . . . a Bordeaux association organized a lecture on the atomic bomb by a well-known specialist; the lecture would surely have been of great interest. A wide distribution of leaflets had announced it to the student public, but not a single student came. Why? Because this happened at exactly the same time as Sputnik's success, and the public was concerned only with this single piece of

news; its sole interest was in Sputnik and the permanent problem was "forgotten."[62]

Information exists by the moment, with one set of current events continually replacing another. News floods in from all areas of the globe and evaporates quickly; for man to retain its content requires qualities of memory people do not possess. As a matter of fact, the unrelenting flow of news inebriates human memory, a loss Ellul laments. "Gasset is entirely right," he says,"in pointing to the decisive role of memory in political affairs. There is no politics where there is no grasp of the past, where there is no continuity, where there is no analysis of errors or capacity to understand the present through that analysis and in that continuity."[63] Man aids in that evaporation and consequent weakening of his political order by driving events into oblivion, that is, actively forgetting for the sake of maintaining sanity.

Another feature of our overwhelming news is its stupefying lack of continuity. One news item does not simply efface another, but erupts as jerkily and haphazardly as digits from a berserk computer. Ellul illustrates:

> My attention attracted today by Turkey will be absorbed tomorrow by a financial crisis in New York, and the day after tomorrow by parachutists in Sumatra. . . . If we look at information bulletins somewhat carefully, we see that subjects vary about 80% each day. Of course, certain important topics are, and have been continuous; but, generally, the information given is only superficial.[64]

A linked series of disclosures on a specific matter (its origin, growth, crisis and denouement) is extremely rare. The array of categories is so bewildering and topic shifts so frequent that citizens perceive no connectedness whatever. A lack of time prevents orderly linkage. Even with major events there is no time for the average person " . . . to get a proper view from the thousand little strokes, the variations of color, intensity and dimension" which his news sources provide.[65]

A news-saturated environment also inter-mixes levels of significance. In reality, under the rushing surface of daily events there are currents, "and on a deeper level still, those depths which do not change except with the slowness of madrepores."[66] Those various planes of political affairs become hopelessly obscured. As a

result, the "spectacle" captures our attention. Our new channels have such an overburdening capacity for details that only the exalted and dramatized are caught. Since a calamity is frequently crowded to the top, the reader/viewer tends toward "a catastrophic view of the world around him. What he learns . . . is inevitably the unusual disasters and not the normal course of events."[67] Further appearances are combined with decisive problems, as the press "synchronizes the varying lengths of events and lives."[68] Through media presentations, "local facts, sometimes secondary, are invested with universal scope."[69] Or the news channels will focus on only one point, to the exclusion of all the rest.[70]

Ellul worries about our inability to distinguish degrees of significance. The ephemeral and spectacular dominate so strongly that citizens have virtually no other input. In fact, to be impassioned on a more decisive level makes one appear out of tune with his time. But discerning levels of analysis—correctly gauging center and periphery—is critical; "what is correct at one level of importance becomes incorrect at another."[71]

Thus we find ourselves caught in a "ceaseless kaleidoscope consisting of thousands of pictures, each following the other at an extraordinary pace."[72] As a consequence, the world "looks like a pointilliste canvas—a thousand details make a thousand points."[73] Today's massive stream of current events aggrandizes the immediate, is discontinuous, inter-mixes levels. With what result? The citizen is not informed but inebriated, not enabled but drowned. Ellul's description of people obsessed with current events contradicts directly democracy's image of a public attentive and vitally involved. His conclusion here is identical to that of crystallization in his description of sociological propaganda. He infers, as a principle, "that the predominance of news produces a fundamental political incapacity . . . be he leader or just a citizen."[74] Citizens rivited to news reject "the truly fundamental problems" and "lacking landmarks" draw no accurate relationships between events and truth.[75]

Perhaps greater specificity here will indicate why the idea of unshackled information, so important to advocates of direct democracy, is considered a trap by Ellul. Professional societies and respected journalists rail at any suppression of information, com-

plain of the silence at Defense or State, and at Presidential reluctance to hold news conferences, leading the average citizen to feel he is not being told all the facts. The press is hailed as champion of the people's right to know and the defenders of the democratic process.

But from Ellul's perspective, matters look different—even sinister. He argues that journalists, in effect, are opting for an increase in arbitrary power rather than serving as a check on it. They are making an unwitting demand for more propaganda. The greatest threat to freedom is not government secrecy but the very profusion of information. Ironically, the net impact is a withering of the critical intelligence as a political force—the very opposite of the intended result. Ellul writes:

> The problem is no longer to inform the citizen who is already over-informed. It is wrong to assume that the highly informed citizen is more capable. Rather, he is drowned in current events, thus . . . becoming the very symbol of the political illusion.[76]

It is this potential demise which is Ellul's burden, the arena where he wants the issue to be fought. While not contending for ignorance of facts, any other level of discussion for him is superficial. He does not attempt to define "news" etymologically, but outlines its three predominant features and then asks whether news—given those characteristics—really strengthens democracy. In contrast, news as a concept receives little analysis today. Ever since John Bryant of the New York *Sun* in 1880 gave the man-bites-dog formula, news has been considered virtually anything reporters say it is. Leroy and Sterling reflect a common opinion:

> At its core, news is a metaphysical concept. Like a theologian discussing the nature of God, one knows news on faith alone. . . . The whole notion of defining news resembles an attempt to find the core of an onion; one peels away the layers or arguments to a non-existent center. One can say that, in the final analysis, any definition of news is going to be a tautology.[77]

Ellul would reject that agnosticism as an excuse for the status quo. The point so grossly misunderstood, according to Ellul, is that the means considered essential to maintaining democracy in a complex modern era actually result in citizens who are attitudinally totalitarian. Therefore, the question is not whether one receives the information or not, but how a person becomes a person.[78]

Democracy as a Composite of Publics

A second prevalent alternative, the group theory of politics,[79] also seeks to modernize democratic thought. Emphasizing democracy as a system of government, this viewpoint finds the direct participation scheme defective because it concentrates on individual voters.[80] The popular will, from this perspective, is not reflected in a sequence of distinct voices. Nation-states instead are visualized as organisms constructed of smaller cells around which public support coallesces.

The important dimension, according to this conception, is not individual behavior as much as groups of all kinds involved in the political process. Ellul labels this viewpoint an "organized democracy" which conceives of "a democratic infra-structure somewhat on the pattern of the old intermediary groups in society before 1789 in France."[81] Intermediaries—political parties and pressure groups, especially—create linkages between government and people, ties which are considered essential for all large-scale democracies. They organize opinion, serve as a basis of belonging and identification, provide nubs of competing power scattered alongside and beneath federated authority, sharpen the issues, eliminate enough cross-currents so that sufficiently distinct alternatives are discernible. These go-betweens make the democratic system workable as organs through which public opinion becomes translated into public policy.

John Dewey as Group Theory Spokesman. From the perspective of group theory, a state functions beneficently to the degree that it promotes integrative communities. A good state "renders the desirable associations solider and more coherent . . . and facilitates mutually helpful cooperations."[82] These elementary collective groupings, "publics," together compose viable democratic societies.

More pointedly, in the crucial section of *Democracy and Education*, Dewey suggested two standards by which we can measure a society's worth. One criterion was the extent to which group interests are consciously shared by all members. The other was the fullness and freedom with which the group interacts with other groups.[83] Undesirable societies set up barriers to open communication on either level, within groups or among them. "Demo-

cracy," in contrast, "is the name for a life of free and enriching communion."[84]

Precisely what Dewey meant by "publics" is not entirely clear. He was not referring directly to primary units such as the family, nor to secondary groups such as labor unions, nor solely to social clusters such as ethnic or religious bodies. Unlike political parties and pressure groups, their reason for existence is not solely civic, although publics behave according to generally consistent political patterns. Publics arise through shared problems; they exist when people sense a common issue which affects them jointly. Herbert Blumer expands:

> The presence of an issue, of discussion, and of collective opinion is the mark of the public. . . . It comes into existence not as a result of design, but as a natural response to a certain kind of situation . . . [which] must be met, a collective decision arrived at through a process of discussion.[85]

Publics, the argument continues, take form through discussion. Groups become units only as experiences are shared and compromises made. While misinformation does occur, the very process of coming to a public mind gives the resulting communalities a certain rational character. Though such knowledge will not always be wise, it is at least evaluative and weighty. The need to defend, justify, prove something untenable, make concessions—all these involve enough discerning, judgment, weighing, to preclude inanity. The resulting mutual understanding excels the specialized and private viewpoint of the individual.

And if the quality of publics relies to a large degree on the adequacy of popular discussion, this effectivness in turn depends on the agencies of communication. Democracy functioned well, Dewey argued, in the community life of Greek city-states and small Nineteenth Century America. From his early Twentieth Century vantage point, he observed a massification and expansion developing which were making our social life shadowy and formless. Thus he turned to the physical tools of communication; their freedom must be unimpeachable, not to activate individuals but to create newly flourishing communities which can be reliably represented in the governing structure.[86] Through media systems, viable groups are effectuated and democracy thus made possible on a wider scale.

Ellul's Response. Ellul takes the concept of publics much more seriously than the starkly individualistic direct participation theory. He agrees that this notion underlies political democracy in essential ways. With Dewey, he is alarmed at seeing these groups disappear into some more abstract massified whole. Ellul speaks the mind of both as he writes:

> An individual thus uprooted [from his primary groups] can only be part of a mass. He is on his own, and individualistic thinking asks of him something he has never been required to do before: that he, the individual, become the measure of all things. . . . He is thrown entirely on his own resources; he can find criteria only in himself.[87]

Dewey recognized this process as dominating his own era: "Our age has few consciously shared interests," he wrote; "local face-to-face communities have been invaded by remote and vast forces. . . . A public exists today, but not a genuinely communal one."[88] This new non-grouped environment dismays Ellul because he realizes that when solid human clusters become fragmented individuals are more readily propagandized. Only when small groups are annihilated, he concludes, only when their equilibrium and resistance evaporate "does total action by propaganda become possible."[89]

However, the hope that communications systems will generate and maintain great communities is completely impossible for Ellul. When insisting on that incapability, he deploys the term "integrational propaganda," the "propaganda of conformity." Ellul's referent is a long term propaganda, "a self-reproducing propaganda that seeks to obtain stable behavior, to adapt the individual to his everyday life, to reshape his thoughts and behavior in terms of the permanent social setting."[90]

Media systems, in this sense, stabilize the social body, unify and reinforce its patterns. They do not produce rapid and spectacular results, but act "slowly, gradually, and imperceptibly," not seeking temporary excitement but a total molding of the person in depth.[91] Dewey had hoped that the means of communication would increase the capacity of human nature and strengthen intelligence and cooperation through shared experience. Because propagandization has an integrational effect, Ellul would declare Dewey's faith absolutely unfounded. The result of shared messages is not human enhancement, but conformity to behavior patterns.

With a line of argument decidedly Tocquevillean,[92] Ellul maintains that modern information structures do not create a mosaic of informed groups, but conformed, integrated wholes. The result is a chain of functional fragments, a society with uniformities, perfectly compliant and adapted. The social order becomes "totalitarian in the sense of the full integration of the individual," with "the breadth of his conscience fully occupied."[93]

Ellul shares Tocqueville's worry that this kind of excessive conformism spells disaster for democratic life. Precisely when "the individual claims to be equal to all other individuals," Ellul declares, "he becomes an abstraction and is in effect reduced to a cipher."[94] He realizes that over-zealous equalitarianism finally leaves only a naked state as the bulwark against social dissolution. As smaller centers of authority are undermined, Tocqueville had feared, only one bastion of power would emerge—the state.[95] The result for Ellul and Tocqueville is the disappearance of a pluralistic political system into despotism.[96] They agree that "no countries need associations more—to prevent either despotism of parties or the arbitrary rule of a prince—than those of a democratic social state."[97]

Ellul shows amazement over public insensitivity to the consequences of continual appeal to the state for solving problems.[98] At the moment of supplication, Ellul contends, "there is no longer an individual citizen." While each still demonstrates different loves and various professions, the final result is the state's absorbing all political particularity. "There can no longer be any real currents, any more than there can be two electric poles of the same sign."[99] Ellul shares with Tocqueville the calamitous testimony of the French Revolution that equality can atomize society and foster an isolated independence which leaves only individual strength as defense against authoritarian states. A democratic regime can "permit itself to be led to the slaughter by democratic public opinion in the name of democracy."[100] As Tocqueville writes: "I believe it is easier to establish an absolute and despotic government among a people whose social conditions are equal than among any other."[101]

Ellul introduces one major modification of Tocqueville. Instead of viewing the massification process as inherent within democracy

itself, as Tocqueville does, Ellul locates this movement in terms of contemporary message sending. Ellul suggests that Tocqueville's proof of democracy's dooming itself "remains true . . . though perhaps for other reasons."[102] That "other reason," for Ellul, is modern information systems. Both see in the United States the clearest example; however, Ellul suggests, not as a demonstration of equalitarianism, but as the perfection of integrational propaganda. Propagandization flourishes in modern civilizations precisely because it breeds on the deficiency Tocqueville saw as congenital to the democratic system. "The means of disseminating propaganda," Ellul declares, depend on the existence of the masses; in the United States these means are called the mass media of communications with good reason: without the mass to receive propaganda and carry it along, propaganda is impossible."[103] Integrational propaganda has established itself as the "most important new fact of our day" because the disappearance of vital group networks "places the individual where he is most easily reached by propaganda."[104] The mass media push citizens toward centralized social control by making them choose "voluntarily" what is politically necessary for highly efficient governing.

Education received Dewey's accolade as the key instrument for enlarging public awareness, destroying barriers and perpetuating democratic ideals. Ellul attacks Dewey's assertions once more, declaring that education provides a bedrock for integrational propaganda and not for democracy. Education, in Ellul's perspective is the former's indispensable constituent and not its antidote. "Primary education," he declares, "is a fundamental condition for the organization of propaganda, even though such a conclusion may run counter to many prejudices."[105] Educational institutions accommodate their participants, they standardize minds—just as all information systems do. They are primary propellants through which a propagandized social order gains acceptance for itself.

Ellul calls the modern American school, "a mechanism to adapt youngsters to American society," and compares it with the Chinese system. The latter differs only in overtly catechizing children while teaching them to read.[106] Ellul denies the modern cry that "the alphabet is the foundation of liberal democracy."[107] If a man cannot read well, he cannot be governed effectively, goes

the argument; if he can, he will not be victimized and deceived. But, Ellul reminds us, the debate should not be whether one reads or writes but what one reads, not whether someone attends school but what he is educated for. Ellul observes that a person is considered motivated, that is, educable, only if inspired in the establishment's direction. Thus the single relevant issue concerns the possibility of freeing pupils from the educational system, the very thing this institution, by definition, cannot perform. Ellul reviews the evolution of education in this century and sees no hope of even discussing how "spiritual autonomy" can result from the "steered orientation" we call education.[108]

Furthermore, integrational propaganda for Ellul does not produce rational discussion, but orthopraxy. Modern means of exchanging messages do not create reasonable men, but militants—activists clamoring for movement of any type regardless of its value or direction. The aim is not modifying opinions, but determining actions. The decisive effects are not in the realm of mind, but in provoking activities per se with maximum efficiency, action without relation to the conscious and intentional objectives of the actors themselves.

Ellul notes the extreme danger of actions as aim, the enormous power of generating action rather than a public mind. "Action makes propaganda's effect irreversible," he notes; once a person obeys propaganda he believes in it, otherwise his action "will seem to him absurd or unjust, which would be intolerable."[109] Propagandization reaches a central core which provides appropriate and expected action. This result Ellul considers "absolutely decisive" in distinguishing our situation today from "classic but outmoded" views of man and his means of communication. Unless we are released from these older notions—that communication serves to modify ideas rather than provoke action—he says, we are condemned to understand nothing about modern communicative tools.

Ellul spells out one more difficulty with the communications-discussion-publics model. He complains about the epistemology presupposed. Clearly groups cannot function without exchange of information. But the crucial issue is the extent man is able to affirm himself as an "I." Ellul insists on an indispensible, irreplaceable dimension to man, a human nature. "Knowledge and compre-

hension," he declares, "can only come to an individual, not to a social body. That is the crux of the basic misunderstanding."[110] Persons gain neither complete awareness nor final self-fulfillment through communities. Man is not merely a confluence of sociological currents. Conceivably, in Ellul's view, as a public mind takes form, men's relatively autonomous center may actually be impaired.[111] Small group bonds may really become "traps" for propagandization, "important relay stations in the flow of total propaganda," offering "no fulcrum for individual resistance."[112]

The disagreement here is not over the importance of individuals.[113] The issue turns on the nature of individuality. And, in that debate, Ellul dissociates himself from both Nineteenth Century individualism and Dewey's collectivism. "It was the fashion in the Nineteenth Century," he writes, "to insist on counterposing the individual and society."[114] Dewey's view is summarized in his famous sentence: " 'It thinks' is a truer psychological statement than 'I think.' "[115] The context makes clear that Dewey is attempting to avoid a conception of human entities with a fixed nature over against another fixed entity, an environment. His referent is a transaction process in which nouns specify the changing features of a partially indeterminate situation. Ellul responds that no society exists unless we assume there are individuals in some genuine sense. "These individuals do not fulfill themselves either in or through the state, the group, the society, or socialism," and a "too nearly perfect adjustment leads to group efficiency and individual degeneration."[116]

Ellul, quite obviously, respects the group theory of political democracy more than the preceding alternative. However, he refutes any suggestions that communication systems create the publics which make democratic life feasible. Noting how *la technique* has infected our means of information, he labels it at this point "integrational propaganda." The consequences are not healthy groupings, but massified assemblages. Education only entrenches the existing system. Instead of discernment; the result is undisciplined activity. In forming cultural units, particular individuals may actually become politically insensitive. Clearly, such thorough propagandization is inimical to the self-governing process.

The Vulnerable Intellectual

The concept of political democracy just noted makes a horizontal shift to groups away from the individualism of direct participation. Another major restatement, "the elitist theory of democracy," moves vertically. First given that name by Seymour Martin Lipset, it is fast becoming part of political science's conventional wisdom.[117] The cornerstone of democratic life from this perspective is not energized persons or robust publics, but a competent stratum of political leaders.[118] Walter Lippmann appeals to such special men and "organized intelligence" as the only alternative, given the complexities of contemporary life.[119] And V. O. Key adds:

> The longer one frets with the puzzle of how democratic regimes manage to function, the more plausible it appears that a substantial part of the explanation is to be found in . . . the leadership echelon.[120]

Thus, even if the citizenry demonstrates apathy and ignorance, effective government becomes possible through an elite group which leads rationally in keeping with democratic norms. In lieu of authoritarian government and rigid censorship, free societies have depended heavily on their intellectual communities for direction and stability. Elitist theory trades on that dependence, making scholars critical for political functions too. Over the centuries, though abating somewhat recently, Western intelligentsia have been hailed as alternatives standing against the arbitrary power of the state. Precisely how intellectuals direct democratic social life has never been answered thoroughly. However, Talcott Parsons' general conclusion seems widely accepted:

> Even in the pragmatic, "tough-minded" United States, the groups with intellectual training . . . have either actually become, or are rapidly approaching the position of being, strategically the most important in American society, possibly for its day-to-day functioning, certainly for its longer-run future.[121]

This orientation to elites is not meant to deny the role of the public at large, nor assume democracies actually live under the tyranny of a few. The factor distinguishing authoritarian and democratic systems from this perspective is the "provision for limited, peaceful competition among members of the elite for the formal positions of leadership within the system."[122] The elite

remains a "democratic elite" because its competition for votes forces it within the bounds of public opinion. Ingeniously, in this view, "the American political system combines government by elite and government by consent."[123]

While unwilling to accept elite groups as saviors, Ellul agrees that a strong intellectual force is desirable. Should they persuade the state "to think again" or to confront real political problems—without themselves becoming omnipotent—the gains would be enormous. Ellul persistently cherishes the hope that "an authentic new tension between the intellectual and political realms" will rise again.[124]

However, Ellul maintains that intellectuals are as vulnerable to sociological propaganda as the ordinary citizen. As a matter of fact, the pat notion that they have superior discernment makes them, for Ellul, an even readier mark. The driving force behind the elitist view is that experts are distinguished from the general public. Whereas mass opinion may bring about "derangements . . . and enfeeblement verging on paralysis," the intellectual is said to personally supersede and prevent these morbid possibilities.[125] As Ellul notes, the educated man naturally does not believe that propagandization affects him. And certainly Ellul does not disavow that "a high intelligence, a broad culture, a constant exercise of the critical faculties" are excellent weapons against sociological propaganda.[126] But, he believes: "As long as man denies the inevitability of a phenomenon, as long as he avoids facing up to it, he will go astray."[127] Ellul speaks generically. He realizes that some superior exceptions with extraordinary energy can find answers and plan their own action. His warning is directed to the subtle haughtiness of intellectuals who disdain "the common people as cattle."[128]

Ellul moves beyond his chiding to develop a substantial case for the intellectual's vulnerability. A significant element in his thesis centers on the crushing invasion of *la technique* into all areas, "also into the sphere of intelligence."[129] The very domains essential to contemporary scholarship are exploited by *la technique*: "Literary techniques (this has been more fully developed than ever, cf. Faulkner), technics in the realm of sociology, law, and history, and . . . science."[130]

Further, since propagandization and bureaucratization are certain and universal in our era, that is, considered most efficient, modern literati have no freedom of intellectual movement. The principle of *la technique*, as it infuses the intellectual's imagination, gives him an imperialistic attitude which denies the validity of any alternative explanatory method. The Indians and Tibetans, for example, are considered objects of research by modern scholars, and not "an intellectual path which is still open, another way leading toward the knowledge of reality and of truth."[131] Complicating the narrowness even more, intellectualism is "no longer nourished at the source of contemplation—awareness of reality," but is limited today to the area of the instrumental mystique that has absorbed it.[132] Propagandization makes scholarship unenduring, impatient and non-serious; the range of debate occurs within narrow, discrete, technical and functional issues such as efficient management of transportation or educational systems.

Another component of Ellul's formulation against elitist political theory involves the propagandee's complicity. Ellul passionately disputes the idea (cf. Blumer) that passive crowds are the innocent victims of some compelling power. Figuratively, contemporary man "offers his throat to the knife of propaganda."[133] A craving for propaganda has welled up from the modern heart as a by-product of pervasive *la technique*. Scholars are inundated also, particularly because they are expected to be informed. Citizens are complicitors out of a vague sense of duty in guiding public affairs, intellectuals out of role expectations. While scholars normally expose themselves to more sources, generally they are of the same *type* as those consulted by average citizens.

Rather than leading man to look at his problems from another perspective, scholarship attaches itself to the fundamental currents of the society it seeks to influence. This happens by necessity. Without immersion in the current, a scholar appears absurd, and, in effect, "cuts himself off from the world in which he is living."[134] Unless scholars reinforce society by going "in the same direction," they "would have no audience at all."[135] We take it for granted that academicians will be acquainted with the latest data and speak to the most relevant issues. In so doing, we multiply their complicity in propagandization.

In addition, the intellectual is expected to apply coherent explanatory patterns to current affairs. Edward Shils emphasizes this point. In every society, he writes, there is need for someone who has "contact with the sacred," who can "penetrate beyond the screen of immediate concern."[136] Walter Lippmann notes an intellectual's typical uneasiness: "He feels that he ought to be doing something about the world's troubles, or at least to be saying something . . .about them. The world needs ideas."[137] Some even expect that once intellectuals have understood currents beneath the present, they can be depended upon as reliable futurologists.[138]

In pursuit of those explanatory designs, Ellul contends, the scholar actually "is being conditioned to absorb all the propaganda that explains the facts he believes himself to be mastering."[139] Inevitably, and for Ellul unfortunately, a scholarship committed to mythology is created. Democracy's actualization under the elitist model rests on the major condition that "political affairs be freed of myths in an effort to put them into proper perspective."[140] Ironically, scholars assigned to generate awareness only entrench the citizenry in illusions. They do not actually provide a stable political posture to assist electorates, but invoke mythologies.[141]

History, in Ellul's framework, is cluttered with illustrations of how intellectuals incant mythologies as explanations for what is happening in the tempest of phenomena. Some, like the New Deal or the Welfare State, are simply conformities to historical or regional or primary group loyalties. The "great myths" are "ideological veils to cover harsh realities; the myth of race, of the proletariat, of the Führer, of Communist society, of productivity."[142] Ellul's rule of thumb: The more "fragmented the canvas," the simpler the mythological pattern needed to explain it.[143]

Why have explanatory myths become "the real support of our whole intellectual system?" Because propagandization's world of "perpetual motion," "menacing shadows" and "chaotic images" begets a need for reassuring stereotypes.[144] More explicitly, man cannot accept "an absurd and incoherent world (for this he would have to be heroic, and even Camus, who considered this the only honest posture, was not really able to stick to it.")[145] In reaction to our complicated epoch's imbalances, modern man seeks "sim-

ple, global, explanations . . . massive doctrinal causes . . . keys with which he can open all doors."[146] Speak of substantive but non-reassuring matters and all communication fails. The scholar's role today, *de facto*, is not increasing awareness but preventing desperation, disposing benedictions equivalent to those formerly given by religion, promising answers for insoluble dilemmas. Obviously, those assurances result not from cooly lucid insights but from marshalling mythologies.

Enveloped in *la technique*, forced into "mastering" all relevant materials, and entreated for stereotypes, contemporary intellectuals have actually lost their detachment and become so propagandized that all possibilities for their democratic leadership have been eclipsed.

Summary

IN THE COURSE of elaborating *la technique*, Ellul stoutly contradicts the democratic assumption that citizens can have sufficient information to participate knowledgeably in the governing process. *La technique* converts message systems into propagandization networks and erects an inflexible boundary which democracy cannot cross. Contemporary media are not information channels, but purveyors of sociological propaganda.

This latter, general proposition is developed from a dizzying number of perspectives. In its largest framework, the propaganda process produces crystallized and self-justified man, entailing two corollaries: Information and propaganda are identical concepts; public opinion does not result from knowledgeable use of information but is simply a crowd's unpredictable arousal over political fads.

Ellul's principle has destructive implications for advocates of direct participation through technology. His analysis of our news saturated environment convinces Ellul that today's citizen is not vitally informed but inebriated. Similarly, the group theory of politics is an illusory alternative. Propaganda's integrationalism yields massification, not healthy publics. The elitism option likewise flounders. Intellectuals, thoroughly propagandized in modern life, generate mythologies cloaked as valid insight.

Democracy is not efficient and thus is inimical to *la technique* as sociological propaganda. Yet contemporary democratic states cannot govern without propagandization. The choice is enormously unpleasant; democracy either must utilize propaganda—which by nature is anti-democratic—or it will perish. With "maddening thoroughness" Ellul renders that dilemma inescapable. Perhaps Lippmann's instincts at the time of this death about the "ungovernability of man" are correct after all.

NOTES

1. For a typical contemporary statement see Thomas A. Emerson, "Communication and Freedom of Expression," *Scientific American*, 227:170 (September 1972).

2. *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, Andrew Lipscomb, ed., Vol. 15 (Washington: Jefferson Memorial Association, 1903), p. 489.

3. *Free Press, Free People: The Best Cause* (New York: Macmillan Free Press, 1973), p. 511.

4. *William Allen White Memorial Lecture: Life-Line of Democracy* (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 1964), p. 5. He adds: "If the newsmen of today and tomorrow are diligent workers and balanced thinkers . . . then I have no doubt that the American Democracy will survive and flourish. If the press fails in its responsibility . . . then our great experiment in democracy will fail."

5. Aldous Huxley originally recommended Ellul's *La Technique* to the Center's President, Robert Hutchins, in 1960. Huxley was "jealous of the author's penetration" and raved over the "marvelous work" which "really made the case" he himself attempted in *Brave New World*. Hutchins agreed and established the Center and its magazine as a forum for extended analysis of Ellul's ideas. Cf. "The Divine Persuasion: An Interview with John Wilkinson About Ellul," *The Center Magazine*, 3 (May 1970), p. 13.

6. Jacques Ellul, in *Introducing Jacques Ellul*, James Y. Holloway, ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1970), p. 6.

7. I have elsewhere written: "Jacques Ellul's fundamental accomplishment is adding the notion *la technique* to contemporary social philosophy. He does not merely suggest a new vocabulary item, but contributes an original thesis of considerable consequence. Ellul's organizing idea ranks with the theoretical achievements signified, for example, by Durkheim's *anomie*, Tocqueville's individualism, Dilthey's *lebenswelt*, Max Weber's rationalization, Hegel's dialectic, Hume's conventionalism and Marx's historical materialism." "Jacques Ellul's *La Technique* in a Communications Context," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1974, p. 271.

8. *The Technological Society*, trans. John Wilkinson (New York: Vintage, 1967), p. xxv.

9. Ellul's "Preface," *Propaganda*, trans. Konrad Kellen (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), p. ix.

10. James Hastings Nichols, "Introduction," in *Force and Freedom: Reflections on History*, by Jacob Burckhardt (New York: Pantheon Books, 1943), pp. 67-8.

11. *Technological Society*, p. xxiv. The content of that reality is developed more extensively in the paragraphs following. Formally, Ellul would agree with Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann's definition of reality: "A quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognize as having a being independent

of our own volition (we cannot 'wish them away')." *Social Construction of Reality* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1967), p. 1.

12. Ellul chides several scholars for reducing technique to a series of physical operations: Arnold Toynbee, James Burnham, Marcel Mauss, Jean Fourastie, Andre Vincent, Georges Friedmann. *Technological Society*, pp. 11-21.

13. Robert Nisbet, *The Sociological Tradition* (New York: Basic Books, 1966), p. 259.

14. Commission on Freedom of the Press, *A Free and Responsible Press* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), p. 113.

15. *The Political Illusion*, trans. Konard Kellen (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), pp. 160-61; cf. also his "Technique, Institutions, and Awareness," *The American Behavioral Scientist*, July-August 1968, pp. 38-42, It should be clear that Ellul does not rail against an outmoded, classical view of democratic commonwealths. Classical democratic man—where rationality implies a syllogistic process free of predispositions—never becomes a real concern for him. He adopts the weightier task of evaluating the prevalent perspective which entails only something non-delirious about man. His object of consideration is non-extremist democratic theory which suggests mildly that citizens "should be aware of the correct state of public affairs at the present and alternative proposals for actions." (Bernard Berelson, "Democratic Theory and Public Opinion," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Fall 1952, pp. 324-6). Ellul distinguishes specifically between "rational man" with a modicum of civic knowledge and the "rationalistic man" of classical theory (*Technological Society*, p. 264).

16. Cf. *Propaganda*, p. 256. The precise manner in which propagandization is inimical to democracy's pluralism is clarified as this chapter proceeds, particularly in the "Democracy as a Composite of Publics" section, *infra*.

17. *Propaganda*, p. 64. Elsewhere, Ellul includes all forms of social and psychological pressure, institutional relations, door-to-door canvassing, and publicity (pp. 9-10).

18. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

19. *Book Week*, 28 Nov. 1965, p. 5.

20. I have carefully avoided "mass media" at this early stage. Though that term appears in the four sections which follow, Ellul is concerned that the external phenomena not be equated with the operating idea underlying them. He specifically denies that *Propaganda* is a study of the mass media *per se* (p. xiv).

21. *Propaganda*, p. 64. For a similar, but expanded example, see Ellul's reference to the Motion Picture Association, p. 67. He develops "persuasion from within" more thoroughly in "The Obstacles to Communication Arising From Propaganda Habits," *The Student World*, 4:401-10 (1959).

22. *Political Illusion*, pp. 57-58; see also *Propaganda*, p. 166.

23. Ellul identifies Harold Lasswell and the Institute for Propaganda Analysis as the source of this thinking (cf. *Propaganda*, pp. xi-xii, 71, 118). An emphasis on overt attempts at indoctrination, of course, results from the

initial interest in World War I. Though "deliberate influences" more recently have been sought in both commercial and political persuasion, the framework and pejorative tone have been conditioned by our stream of studies on the "evil" Fascists, Mussolini's Italy, Nazis and Communists. Defining propaganda as a "tissue of lies" results from overgeneralizing the results of this research. Ellul contends that propaganda's essence "is very much deeper than the deployment of lies and the attachment of a man to false ideas" (*Student World*, p. 406).

24. Deceiving in the sense that the phenomenon is complex enough to still allow us to separate the two dimensions intellectually, even though "to adopt this view is to prevent oneself from understanding anything about the actual phenomenon." *Propaganda*, p. x. Cf. also, "Information and Propaganda," *Diogenes: International Review of Philosophy and Humanistic Studies*, June 1957, pp. 61-77.

25. "Information and Propaganda," p. 61.

26. *Propaganda*, p. 52; cf. also p. x.

27. These types of propaganda are described in *Propaganda*, Ch. 1, Sec. 3. The precise meaning and impact of the first two—the most significant ones—are outlined in the two sections below: "Participation and Current Events" and "Democracy As a Composite of Publics." The plural title of Ellul's book, *Propagandes*, refers to these varying types of propaganda, eight in all—the four covert kinds, and a matching overt series (psychological, agitational, vertical, irrational). No claim is made here that Ellul's categories solve all the definitional problems involved. When Ernst Kris and Nathan Leites published their survey of "propaganda's" usage, they suggested that through World War II the term referred essentially "to the political sphere" ("Trends in Twentieth Century Propaganda," *Psychoanalysis and the Social Sciences*, 1, 1957). We are now beginning to apply the term everywhere· advertising, intentional advocacy, public relations, religious outreach, political campaigns, lobbying. Ellul lauds this expansion in meaning, but insists they are all overt forms and together not as crucial as our unwitting reinforcement of *la technique* through the covert types.

28. It is largely on this basis that Ellul rejects all small group propaganda experiments. If propagandization is really a broad band of forces erupting within society, it cannot be duplicated in a laboratory. The moment we experiment, he says, with a particular method or with small doses "it ceases to be propaganda. . . . We must examine not a test group but a whole nation. . . . Many limited studies on . . . local conditions have been made, but their findings have little value by themselves when considered outside the setting of mass society" (*Propaganda*, pp. xii-xiii, n. 6, p. 99; cf. also p. 147).

29. "Public opinion" is repeated more often in *Propaganda* than any other term (pp. 121-132 esp.); it takes up a large section of *Political Illusion* (pp. 98-135 esp.) and though the term itself is not used in "Information and Propaganda," the latter deals primarily with the problem of how public opinion is formed.

30. Thomas Jefferson hailed this notion in his letter to Edward Carrington (*Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, VI, p. 55): "The basis of governments being the option of the people, the first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter." This quotation has reappeared repeatedly in American journalism and political science. Cf. Herbert Brucker, *Journalist: Eyewitness to History* (New York: Macmillan, 1962), pp. 58-9. A recent example is its vigorous use in the "Freedom of Information Campaign;" cf. *Crusade for Democracy* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1961).

31. Cf. Harwood Childs, *Public Opinion: Nature, Formation, and Role* (Princeton, N.J.: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1965), pp. 19 ff.

32. *Political Illusion*, p. 98.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

34. Ellul mentions Walter Lippmann only once (*Political Illusion*, p. 128), but his writing is obviously indebted here to Lippmann's "The World Outside and the Pictures in Our Heads," *Public Opinion* (1922), in Free Press edition (1949), pp. 3-20. Ellul's basic disagreement with Lippmann becomes apparent in this essay's final section, "The Vulnerable Intellectual," *infra*. At this point, the only difference is one of extent.

35. *Political Illusion*, p. 104. (Original emphasis.)

36. *Ibid.*, p. 120.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 118.

38. Ronald Rubin's review of *Propaganda* (*Commonweal*, May 20, 1966, pp. 259-60) misinterprets Ellul as being exclusively concerned with the nature of public relations in the modern state.

39. *Political Illusion*, p. 90.

40. Since David Hume, political scientists have recognized that "this maxim [the rule of opinion] extends to the most despotic and most military governments, as well as the most free and most popular" ("Essay Four" in his *Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects*, Boston: J. P. Mendum, 1849, p. 29). Ellul agrees, though emphasizes the particular meaning public opinion carries in democratic systems—democracies having made it morally mandatory that the will of the people should prevail.

41. *Political Illusion*, p. 127.

42. For example: "Public opinion is the social judgment reached upon a question of general or civic import after conscious, rational public discussion," Clyde L. King, "Public Opinion in Government," in *Readings in Public Opinion*, W. B. Graves, ed. (New York: Appleton, 1928), p. xxiii. For a nearly identical definition see James T. Young, *The New American Government and Its Work* (New York: Macmillan, 1923), pp. 577-8.

43. Joseph K. Folsom, *Social Psychology* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1931), p. 540.

44. *Political Illusion*, p. 122.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 104. If the media, as Ellul asserts, do not report facts but only convey issues of dramatic quality, the implications for defining news are

enormous. News is, then, not just objective reporting of data, but anything arousing public opinion. Cf. "Participation and Current Events," *infra*.

46. Obviously not everyone under this construction is expected to participate. All issues will not seem salient, and many will regularly capitulate to the better informed. However, the point is that "nothing precludes any individual from participating to his own satisfaction." Norman Luttbeg, ed., *Public Opinion and Public Policy: Models of Political Linkage* (Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey Press, 1968), p. 1.

47. Precisely how citizen energy formulates policy is usually discussed only in generalities. How public opinion becomes regulatory law is rarely specified. For a discussion of this conversion problem, see Alan Westin, *Information Technology in a Democracy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 239; and Herbert McClosky, "Consensus and Ideology in American Politics," *American Political Science Review*, June 1964, pp. 361-82.

48. Ellul says that "free flow of information" is the "facet to which Americans are most attached and which seems to them to be the key to the problem of information." "Information and Propaganda," p. 62. Since the phrase was first introduced by the Hutchins Commission as a concomitant of the "public's right to know," it has become the eye of the cyclone for most current controversies within the journalism profession. "Free flow in information," in sloganized form, brings to focus many dimensions of the "press as life-line" issue: shield laws, censorship, Pentagon Papers, military secrecy, government secrecy, fair trial, data manipulation and the like.

49. Westin, *Information Technology in a Democracy*, p. 1.

50. "Communication and the Community," *Scientific American*, 227: 143-50 (September 1972).

51. "The American Transition," *The New Republic*, 157: 20 (December 20, 1967).

52. Charles W. Roll and Albert Cantrill, *Polls* (New York: Basic Books, Inc. 1972), p. 166.

53. *No More Second Hand God* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1963), pp. 4, 18.

54. In 1923, for example, the American Society of Newspaper Editors adopted its "Canons of Journalism" encouraging truthfulness, fair play, decency, higher standards in all phases. The radio code of 1937 and television's in 1952 included suggestions for promoting public morals and conforming to accepted standards of good taste. For a summary, see John W. C. Johnstone, *et al.*, "The Professional Values of American Newsmen," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36:522-40 (Winter 1972-73). The Hutchins Commission and the Kerner and Eisenhower reports have essentially repeated these earlier statements; cf. David Leroy and Christopher Sterling, *Mass News: Practices, Controversies, and Alternatives* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973), p. 10.

55. Jack McLeod and Searle J. Hawley, "Professionalization Among Newsmen," *Journalism Quarterly*, 41:528-39 (Autumn 1964).

56. Ruth Jacobs, "The Journalist and Sociological Enterprises as Ideal Types," *American Sociologist*, 5:348-50 (November 1970) analyses the reporter's commitment to "facts" and compares it to the sociologist's search for "pure data." For a survey of more traditional descriptions of the issues here, see James Benet, "Interpretation and Objectivity in Journalism," in *Academics on the Line*, Arlene K. Daniels and Rachael Kahn-Hut eds. (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1970), where throughout, objective information is assumed to be vital; cf. also Douglass Cater, "What Hinders the Reporter's Efforts to Report National Affairs?" in *The Citizen and the News*, David Host, ed. (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1962), pp. 57-66.

57. "Objectivity as Strategic Ritual: An Examination of Newsmen's Notions of Objectivity," *American Journal of Sociology*, 77:660-79 (January 1972). Tuchman applies Everett Hughes' definition of ritual: see *Men and Their Work* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1964) to ten situations and then summarizes her conclusions on pp. 675-6.

58. See William R. Rivers, "Monitoring Media: The New Confusion," *Progressive*, December 1971, pp. 25-9.

59. Ellul's summary in "Information and Propaganda," p. 62. His response to each specific solution and his fundamental quarrel with this viewpoint as a whole are described in the remaining sections of this essay, *infra*. However, it should be recalled that for Ellul all these suggestions for "organizing information" are only one more symptom of the politicized, administrative frame of mind described above as *la technique*. Thus new issues are not being introduced, only variations on the same themes.

60. John Hohenberg is an example of how the reporter and the news function are glorified in contemporary discussion. It is the following mentality that I am referring to: "He [journalist] has set off the massive information explosion that bursts . . . from the wire services and newspapers, radio and television, the weekly news and picture magazine, and the journals of intellectual comment and criticism. Nothing comparable in scope has ever occurred before in any nation that has aspired to world leadership." *The News Media: A Journalist Looks at His Profession* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968), p. ix.

61. Insofar as Ellul sheds light on that form of human expression we call "news," he helps fill a void in contemporary scholarship. My colleague, James Carey, dramatizes the need for understanding this symbolic form. What is lacking, he argues, is the "history of the idea of a report: its emergence among a certain group of people as a desirable form of rendering reality, its changing fortunes, definitions and redefinitions over time." In "The Problem of Journalism History," *Journalism History*, Spring 1974, p. 5. Ellul constructs a synchronic, rather than diachronic, analysis; however, it does illuminate the journalistic report to a worthwhile degree.

62. *Propaganda*, pp. 44-5.

63. *Political Illusion*, p. 62. "The man who lives in the news is a man without memory" (p. 61). Cf. also, "Information and Propaganda," p. 64.

64. *Political Illusion*, p. 57; "Information and Propaganda," p. 75.

65. *Propaganda*, p. 145.

66. *Political Illusion*, p. 60.

67. *Propaganda*, p. 145. "He does not read about the thousands of trains that every day arrive normally at their destination, but he learns all the details of a train accident."

68. *Political Illusion*, p. 115.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 114.

70. *Propaganda*, p. 45. Cf. also "Technique, Institutions and Awareness," p. 70.

71. "Information and Propaganda," p. 70.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

73. *Propaganda*, p. 145.

74. *Political Illusion*, pp. 55-6.

75. *Ibid.*, p. 60; cf. *Propaganda*, p. 47.

76. *Ibid.*, p. 204.

77. *Mass News*, p. 123.

78. Ellul develops this latter notion in *Presence of the Kingdom*, trans. Olive Wyon (New York: Seabury Press, 1967); *To Will and To Do*, trans. C. Edward Hopkin (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1969); and "Between Chaos and Paralysis," *The Christian Century*, 85: 747-50 (June 5, 1968).

79. David Truman's *The Governmental Process* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951) has achieved semi-classical status as the basic outline of the group theory of politics. Truman himself describes the aim of his study as "a restatement of the role of groups in the political process," plus evaluation and "synthesis that will give an explanation of group politics" (p. ix). See Norman Luttbeg's critique, in *Public Opinion and Public Policy* (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press, 1968), p. 119.

80. As to direct democracy, Ellul (*Political Illusion*, p. 173) asks: "Is the popular will only the sum of perfectly single individual voices?" And John Dewey raised a fundamental complaint: "The human being whom we fasten upon as individual *par excellence* is moved and regulated by his associations with others; what he does and what the consequences of his behavior are, what his experience consists of, cannot even be described much less accounted for, in isolation." *Public and Its Problems* (Chicago: Swallow Press, 1954), p. 188.

81. *Political Illusion*, p. 173.

82. John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems*, p. 38. John Dewey is the exemplar here. Jerome Nathanson [*John Dewey: The Reconstruction of the Democratic Life* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), pp. 2, 72] concludes: "The philosophy of John Dewey is the philosophy of democracy. That is not to say that he invented or created it. Obviously he did neither. But he did give a creative, a growing edge to the life he inherited in Reconstruction Vermont. . . . Dewey is, above all else, the philosopher of democracy." Moreover, note that the most ambitious application of intermediary groups to political science (David Truman's *The Governmental Process*) quotes Dewey more frequently than any other writer.

83. New York: Macmillan, 1916, pp. 94-100.

84. John Dewey, *Intelligence in the Modern World* (New York: Modern Library, 1939), p. 400. And similarly: "Regarded as an idea, democracy . . . is the idea of community life itself." *Public and Problems*, p. 148.

85. "The Mass, The Public, and Public Opinion," in *New Outline of the Principles of Sociology*, Alfred McClung Lee, ed. (New York: Barnes and Noble), p. 189. For some of the logical errors resulting from careless definisions of "public," see Floyd H. Allport, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 1:8-9 (January 1937).

86. Robert E. Park, Dewey's colleague, adds in a typical statement: "Communication creates, or makes possible at least, that consensus and understanding among the individual components of a social group which eventually gives it and them the character not merely of society but of a cultural unit." In "Reflections on Communication and Culture," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 44 (September 1938), p. 191.

87. *Propaganda*, p. 92.

88. *Public and Its Problems*, pp. 131, 139. While the group breakdown theme permeates all his work, he delineates it most fully in *Individualism Old and New* (New York: Minton and Balch, 1930), pp. 81-6.

89. *Propaganda*, p. 9; cf. also pp. 101-2. He refers in a footnore (*Ibid.*, n. 3, p. 9) to the work of Edward A. Shils and Morris Janowitz ["Cohesion and Disintegration in the Wehrmacht in World War II," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 12:280-315 (1948)] as a demonstration of the group's importance in resisting propaganda.

90. *Propaganda*, pp. 74-5.

91. *Ibid.*, p. 77.

92. Though Ellul's general indebtedness to Alexis de Tocqueville becomes obvious in the paragraphs below, he mentions Tocqueville's name only twice. In the reference applicable here, he writes: "We must understand that democracy is always infinitely precarious and is mortally endangered by every new progress. . . . More than that, today as yesterday—though perhaps for other reasons—de Tocqueville's proof that democracy dooms itself by its own internal evolution remains true." *Political Illusion*, p. 230; cf. also p. xxii.

93. *Propaganda*, pp. 30, 64.

94. *Ibid.*, p. 90.

95. *Democracy in America*, I, pp. 9-20.

96. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 690-5. Tocqueville's notion of the drift toward a mass society through the elimination of local groups (intermediate centers of power between individuals and the national state) has been analyzed by Robert Nisbet, *The Quest for Community* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), and by S. M. Lipset, *et al.*, *Union Democracy* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1956), pp. 82 ff.

97. *Democracy in America*, I, p. 192.

98. *Political Illusion*, pp. 75-80, are vintage Tocqueville in describing this "inveterate belief on the part of most citizens" (p. 78).

99. *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

100. *Ibid.*, p. 121.

101. *Democracy in America*, II, p. 695.

102. *Political Illusion*, p. 230.

103. *Propaganda*, p. 95; cf. also pp. 27, 76.

104. *Ibid.*, pp. 9, 79.

105. *Ibid.*, p. 84. Only Jesuit education of the 1930s provided opportunities for developing a critical spirit, Ellul believes. His object of attack is "most modern teaching provided by our audio-visual instruction which is never anything but a pure and simple mechanism of adaptation to society, thus precluding from the beginning all true awareness, all reflection." *Political Illusion*, p. 204.

107. *A Critique of the New Commonplaces*, trans. Helen Weaver (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968), pp. 255-63.

108. *Political Illusion*, p. 80.

109. *Propaganda*, p. 29.

110. *Political Illusion*, p. 205. When Ellul uses the term "knowledge" he intends it in a generally European sense, described (in contrast to typical American stress on "information") by Robert K. Merton [*Social Theory and Social Structure*, rev. ed. (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1957), p. 442]: "Knowledge implies a *body* of facts or ideas, whereas information carries no such implication of systematically connected facts or ideas. . . . The European variant typically thinks about a total structure of knowledge available. The American emphasis has been on aggregates of discrete bits of information, the European on systems of doctrine. For the European, it is essential to analyze the system of tenets in all their complex interrelation, with an eye to conceptual unit, levels of abstraction and concreteness, and categorization."

111. This sentence is one way of summarizing a long and rambling section (*Propaganda*, pp. 90 ff.) in which Ellul argues that the alternatives are not raw individualism, an unstructured mass society, or organic groups. His vexation is over the manner in which all are uniformly propagandized. Modern information systems reach individuals, whether associated with local structures or segments of a whole. They appeal to the mass, groups, individuals simultaneously; cf. *Propaganda*, p. 91.

112. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

113. Dewey himself wrote: "Individuals are the finally decisive factors of the nature and movement of human life. . . . Individuals who are democratic in thought and action, are the final warrant for the existence and endurance of democratic institutions." "What I Believe," in *I Believe*, Clifton Fadiman, ed. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1939), pp. 347-8.

114. *Political Illusion*, p. 210. Ellul develops his argument more fully in an interesting article, "Information et vie Privee: Perspectives," *Foi et Vie*, June 1967, pp. 52-66. Note also his distinction between "individualist theory" and "individualist reality" in *Propaganda*, p. 91.

115. *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 314.

116. *Political Illusion*, p. 211.

117. See his introduction to the paperback edition of Robert Michel's *Political Parties* (New York: Collier Books, 1962), p. 33.

118. For a valuable summary and critique of the literature here, see Peter Bachrach, *The Theory of Democratic Elitism* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1967).

119. Cf. *The Good Society* (Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1937), ch. 12; and "Should the Majority Rule," *The Essential Lippmann*, Clinton Rossiter and James Lace, eds. (New York: Random House, 1963), pp. 3-14.

120. *Public Opinion and American Democracy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961), p. 537. See also Bernard Berelson, *et al.*, *Voting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), ch. 14; Robert Dahl, *Who Governs?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), pp. 225-7; and Herbert McClosky, "Consensus and Ideology in American Politics," *American Political Science Review*, 58: 361-82 (June 1964).

121. "The Intellectual: A Social Role Category," in *On Intellectuals*, Philip Rieff, ed. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1969), p. 19.

122. Jack L. Walker, "A Critique of the Elitist Theory of Democracy," *The American Political Science Review*, 60 (June 1966), 286. As Joseph Schumpeter summarized the theory: "The democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote." *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1950), p. 269.

123. Stephen V. Monsma, "Political Leaders and Democratic Values," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 35: 350-7 (Fall 1971).

124. *Political Illusion*, n. 3, p. 223.

125. Cf. Walter Lippmann, *The Public Philosophy* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1956), p. 19.

126. *Propaganda*, p. 111.

127. *Ibid.*, p. xvi.

128. *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

129. *Presence of the Kingdom*, p. 108.

130. *Ibid.*, pp. 108-9. Ellul explores the saturation of *la technique* into pedagogical, vocational and information-storage areas in *Technological Society* (pp. 335-87)—many of them considered especially important for effective scholarship.

131. *Presence of the Kingdom*, p. 110.

132. *Ibid.*, pp. 110-11.

133. *Propaganda*, p. 103. For additional strong statements on complicity, see esp. *Propaganda*, pp. 121, 160. For example: "Contemporary man needs propaganda, he asks for it, in fact he almost instigates it. . . . Propaganda satisfies him—even if he protests against propaganda *in abstracto*, or considers himself immune to it—he follows its route" (p. 160).

134. *Presence of the Kingdom*, p. 103.

135. *Propaganda*, p. 40.

136. "The Intellectuals and the Powers: Some Perspectives for Comparative Analysis," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, I (October 1958), pp. 5-22.

137. "The Scholar in a Troubled World," *Atlantic Monthly*, August 1932, 148-52.

138. Edward Shils, "The Intellectuals and the Future," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 23:7-14 (October 1967).

139. *Propaganda*, p. 113.

140. *Political Illusion*, p. 202.

141. The term "mythologies" is used here to distinguish it from the more generally accepted use of the term "myth" today—that set of feelings, tacit agreements and symbols produced by a social group by which events are unconsciously framed (which Ellul calls "collective sociological presuppositions"). Mythology (which Ellul, following the older usage, labels "myth") is "a vigorous impulse, strongly colored, irrational and charged with all of man's power to believe. It contains a religious element." *Propaganda*, pp. 39-40. Ellul suggests that a combination of these presuppositions and myths is "the psycho-sociological base on which modern societyrests." *Propaganda*, p. 38. Ellul apparently "hesitates to use the word myth" because its usage is so "obscure . . . and diverse." [In *Meaning of the City* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1971), p. 18.] He also wrestles with definitions, and presents illustrative lists, in "Modern Myths," *Diogenes*, September 1958, pp. 23-40.

142. *Propaganda*, p. 31; for a similar list, cf. *Presence of the Kingdom*, p. 103.

143. *Propaganda*, p. 146.

144. *Presence of the Kingdom*, pp. 99-103; cf. *Propaganda*, p. 159.

145. *Propaganda*, p. 146.

146. *Ibid.*, p. 159; cf. "Information and Propaganda," p. 77.

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